Reducing Racial Disparities in Victimization

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Racial Disparities in Policing

- Often we focus on racial disparities in enforcement
  - Stops, arrests, use of force, officer-involved shootings (Cunningham and Gillezeau 2019, West 2020, Ba et al 2020, Pierson et al 2020)

- Less attention to racial disparities in victimization
  - 2018 NCVS: black respondents 22% more likely to experience violent crime; 41% more likely to experience serious violent/property crime, relative to non-Hispanic white respondents
  - These disparities persistent over time
Miller and Segal (2018): Female police officers increase reporting of and decrease incidence of violent crimes against women

Bulman (2019): Black sheriffs reduce ratio of black arrests/white arrests

Ba et al (2020): Black Chicago PD officers make fewer discretionary stops/arrests for minor crimes, have fewer uses of force, relative to white officers
Racial composition of police force may be affected by factors that also affect outcomes.

Externally imposed affirmative action plans may exogenously change racial composition of police force.

- McCrary (2007)
  - Litigation over race-based discrimination increases proportion of black officers (also Miller and Segal 2012)
  - No apparent effects on overall reported crime rates

Did litigation leading to race-based affirmative action in policing reduce racial disparities in victimization?
Data

- National Crime Victimization Survey
  - Nationally representative sample of 50,000 households
  - Respondents interviewed every 6 mos. about victimization in previous 6 mos.
  - Geocoded at MSA level for 40 largest MSAs, 1979-2004

- Litigation Data
  - Miller and Segal (2012): Litigation histories for 479 large local law enforcement agencies; 140 litigated for employment discrimination 1969-2000
  - 96% with identifiable target group involved black employees
  - 167 of these agencies located in a core county of an MSA in NCVS sample
Treated MSA: litigation of core county agency leading to AA (N = 26)

- Treatment predictable by pretreatment observables

- Treatment timing: year of litigation onset (1970-1986)

  - Treatment timing not predictable by pretreatment observables

- Sample restricted to treated MSAs only (Johnson 2016, Deshpande and Li 2019)
Timing of Litigation Onset in Treated MSAs, 1970-1986
Event Study Model; Treated MSAs Only

\[ \text{Victimization}_{imt} = \sum_{y=-7}^{y=24} \beta_y I(t - t^*_m = y) + \beta_t + \beta_m + \epsilon_{imt} \]

- \( \text{Victimization}_{imt} = 1 \) if respondent i experiences victimization in MSA m in year t
- \( t^*_m = \) litigation onset year in MSA m
- \( I = \) indicators for years before/after AA onset
- \( \beta_t = \) year fe
- \( \beta_m = \) MSA fe
- SEs clustered on MSAs
- Linear probability model
- Subsetted by black and non-Hispanic white respondents (or interaction term)
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in White and Black Victimization Rates, 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in Racial Disparities in Victimization, 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in White and Black Reporting Rates, 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in Overall Victimization and Reporting Rates, 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in All Victimization and Reported Victimization, 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation on Changes in Reported Victimization (NCVS) and Offenses Known to Law Enforcement (UCR), 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in Reasons for Not Reporting: Mistrust Police, 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in Reasons for Not Reporting: Other Reasons, 1979-2004
Estimated Effects of Litigation Leading to Affirmative Action on Changes in Sworn Officers Per Capita, 1979-2004
Affirmative Action Duration and Agency Racial Composition, 1987-2013
Concluding Thoughts

- Think about not just how many officers you have, but which officers you have
  - Litigation leading to affirmative action in policing:
    - Increases trust in police, esp for black victims
    - Increases reporting to police, esp for black victims (suggestively)
    - Decreases victimization, esp of black victims
  - We may be able to reduce both overall victimization and racial disparities in victimization without more police
  - Findings enhance legal justification for affirmative action in policing